

# Activating Communities

Gwen Rose

The Vote Solar Initiative

[www.votesolar.org](http://www.votesolar.org)



# Who we are

- Mission: accelerate transition to RE economy by making solar mainstream
  - Climate change
  - Energy independence
- Formed in 2001 after a successful \$100Million revenue bond campaign in SF
- In 2003 began to focus on state-level policies
- Work as coalition, actively in 16 states
- 43,000 members throughout the US



## 2008 AND BEYOND

TRACK OUR SUCCESS AS WE TAKE THE FIGHT ACROSS THE COUNTRY

## NET METERING

 **INTERCONNECTION**

### UTILITY RATES & REVENUE POLICY



# polling

- 1) Should the legislature support solar?
- 2) How much are you willing to pay?

	<u>Q1</u>	<u>Q2</u>
Florida (2008):	85%	81% (\$1/mth)
Texas (2007):	84%	81% (\$1/mth)
Arizona (2007):	87%	78% (\$5/mth)
California (2005):	77%	56% (50¢/mth)



# motivating, mobilizing...

- Building broad based support
- Web-based efforts
- Media
- CA story



# building coalitions

- Groups supporting solar:
  - Public health
  - Energy independence
  - Climate change
  - Green economy
  - Potential customers
  - Cities & counties
  - Religious
  - Utilities



# web-based community building

Web 1.0: broadcast info, one-way flow

- 43,000 members throughout US
- Action alerts, newsletters, etc
  - ...Web 1.0 is where Vote Solar lives today...
  - ...Web 2.0 is *perhaps* where we'll live soon...

Web 2.0: user-generated, multi-directional flow

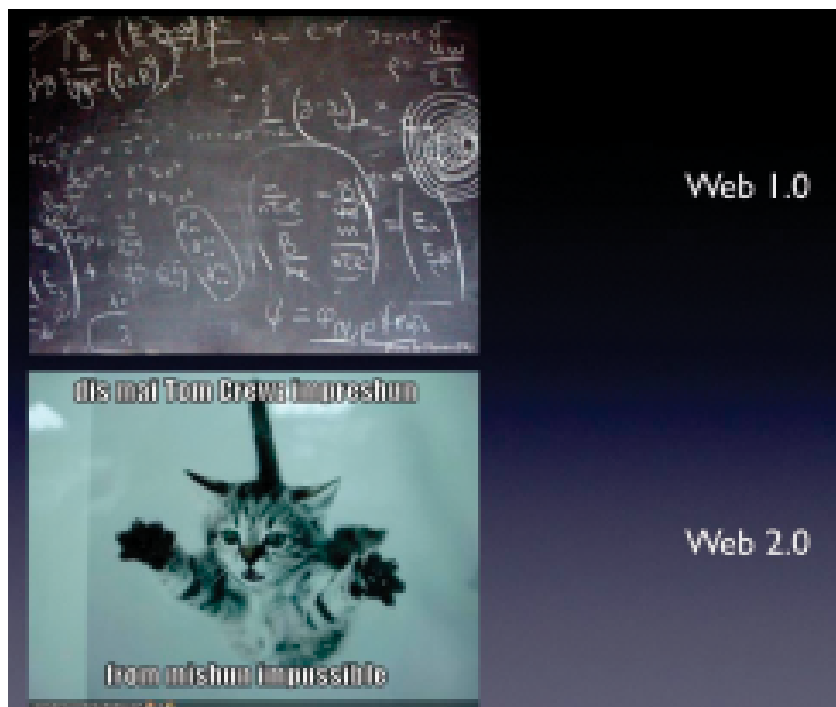
- Mapping/video
- Energy alternative.com
- Twitter, Facebook, meetup.com, YouTube



# Ethan Zuckerman's Cute Cat Theory for Digital Activism

- Web 1.0 was made for physicists to share research papers
- Web 2.0 was made to allow people to share pictures of cats

source: <http://www.ethanzuckerman.com/blog/2008/03/08/the-cute-cat-theory-talk-at-etch/>



	cute videos of your cats	videos of trade union protests
	cute photos of your cats	subversive photos unblocked by firewalls
	overlay your cute cat photos on a map of your neighborhood	overlay of prisons, land ownership in your country
	realtime updates on your cat being cute	realtime updates on whether activists are free or imprisoned
	links to aspects of your cat's online presence	online newsrooms reporting on activist activities



# web 2.0: the power of mobs...

## Twitter:

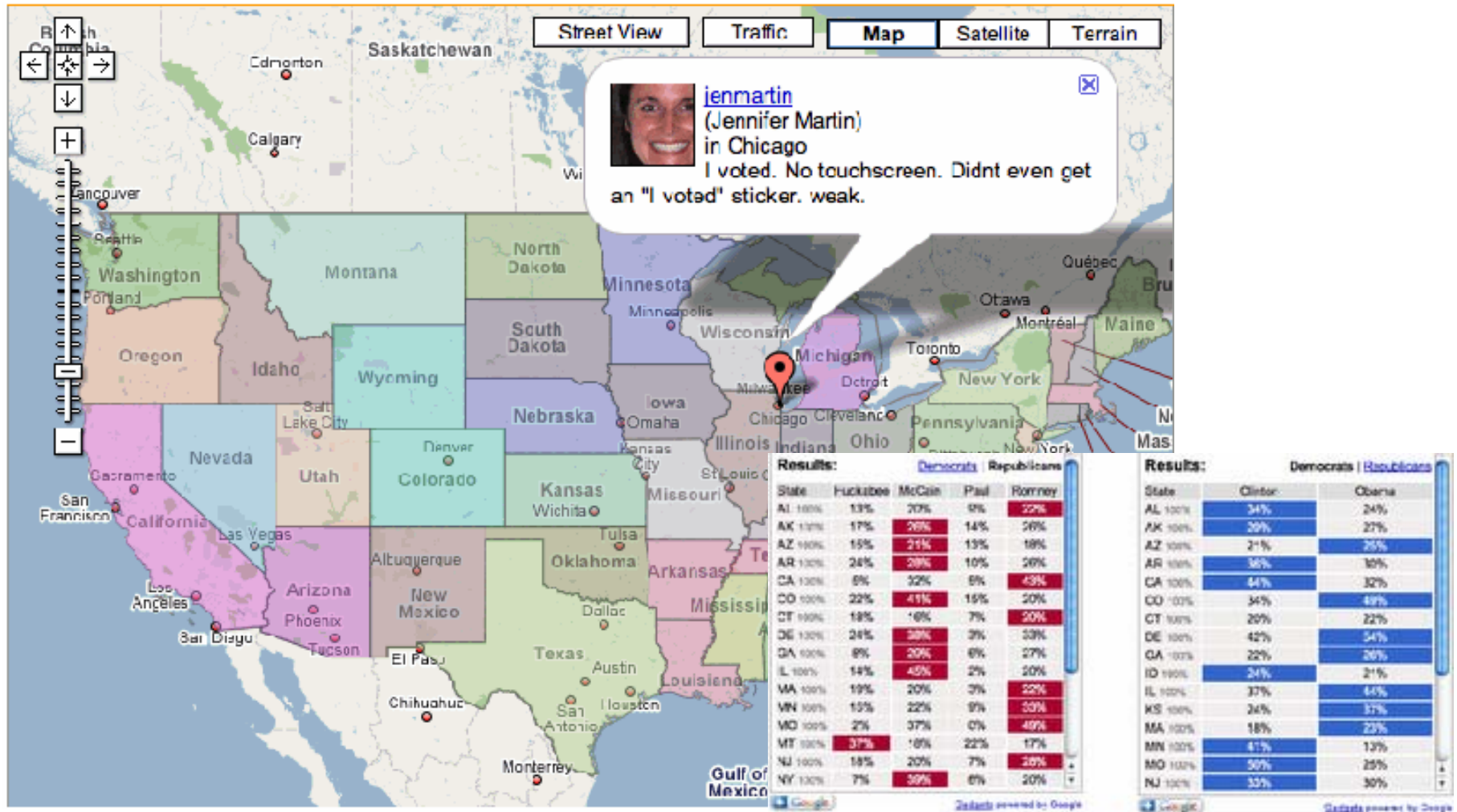
- Choose your flocks, follow, and be followed
- Answers the question: what are you doing now...and now...and now...

## Why bother?

- Social activism: Alaa Abd El Fattah, Egyptian blogger
- Post updates by cellphone during session
- Super Tuesday



# Twitter & Google on Super Tuesday



# Google Maps, YouTube, & media

- Tunisian activists, with help of planespotters, track Tunisian presidential aircraft.
- Foreign Policy magazine published an article on the First Lady's shopping sprees on Tunisian taxpayer money
- [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2uv4a\\_tunisie-avion-presidentiel-a-quoi-e\\_news](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2uv4a_tunisie-avion-presidentiel-a-quoi-e_news)



# web 2.0: real grassroots

- Example: NY Alternative Meetup Group: 398 members, largely strangers get together to talk about RE issues.



Whatever your interest.  
Wherever you are.

Meetups held 74,000 meetings last month!



[What's Cookin' Chicago?!](#)  
"Very nice people and an interesting range of activities."



[Speak French in Plano](#)  
"What a fun group! Looking forward to next time!"



[Columbus Ron Paul 2008 Meetup](#)  
"The group seems very passionate for our cause. The members also seem very knowledgeable in a number of areas, particularly freedom. :)"



[New York Obama Meetup](#)  
"What an amazing group of people! Yes, we can! We are making history!"

Enter an interest:

e.g. Knitting, Moms, Dogs, Baseball

Country

USA

ZIP Code

GO

Or, browse [all interests](#) or [all cities](#)

TIME

"A convenient, non-threatening way to connect to other people who share similar interests and live nearby."

Newsweek

"...helps groups of strangers organize monthly powwows at local watering holes."

Toronto SUN

"...it's important to stay true to your passions or interests, whatever they may be... An opportunity to reconnect with yourself and others in a stress-free environment. It's as simple as that."

## Top Cities

[Atlanta, GA](#)  
[Austin, TX](#)  
[Baltimore, MD](#)  
[Boston, MA](#)  
[Brooklyn, NY](#)  
[Chicago, IL](#)  
[Dallas, TX](#)  
[Denver, CO](#)  
[Houston, TX](#)

[New York, NY](#)  
[Orlando, FL](#)  
[Philadelphia, PA](#)  
[Portland, OR](#)  
[Raleigh, NC](#)  
[Sacramento, CA](#)  
[San Diego, CA](#)  
[San Francisco, CA](#)  
[San Antonio, TX](#)

## Top Interests

[Beppe Grillo Meetups](#)  
[Book Club Meetups](#)  
[Chihuahua Meetups](#)  
[Democratic Party Meetups](#)  
[Dungeons & Dragons Meetups](#)  
[Entrepreneur Meetups](#)  
[French Language Meetups](#)  
[Ghost Tracking Meetups](#)  
[Graphic Design Meetups](#)

[Knitting Meetups](#)  
[Moms Meetups](#)  
[New In Town Meetups](#)  
[Pagan Meetups](#)  
[Poker Meetups](#)  
[Pug Meetups](#)  
[Scrapbooking Meetups](#)  
[Spanish Language Meetups](#)  
[Stay At Home Moms Meetups](#)



# CA story

- \$3.25B incentives for 3000MW of PV
- \$100M solar hot water incentives
- Incentives decline over 9 years

## Goals:

- To create a 'self-sufficient' solar industry
- Homebuilders required to offer solar on all new homes by ~2012

**...Herculean 3-year effort...**

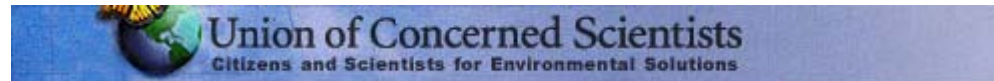


# starring:

## Environmental Groups



Vote Solar



We need a new system of values, a system which recognizes the organic unity between humankind and nature and promotes the ethic of global responsibility.

— Mikhail S. Gorbachev, President Green Cross International



# GREENPEACE



THE PLANNING AND CONSERVATION LEAGUE

## Industry Associations

# PVNow



## Government



*California Public Utilities Commission*



STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL





# ...with well-placed publicity

## Los Angeles Times

FRIDAY, MAY 21, 2004

### Giving Solar a Bright Future

**T**housands of new rooftops are going up in hot, sunny places from Riverside to the Central Valley. Done a little differently, they could be solar collectors, absorbing energy from the sun.

Aiming to create more progressive home-building, state Sen. Kevin Murray (D-Culver City) proposes requiring large-scale developers to install solar systems in a percentage of houses starting in 2006.

It costs more to retrofit a house with solar than to build in the system during construction. A built-in is also more effective because

buildings. The bill's advocates, for their part, use the sunniest possible figures: At \$11,000 extra for a two-kilowatt system, they say, the monthly mortgage payment would go up by a little more than \$50, while the system would save that much each month in energy bills. As fossil fuels become more expensive, the savings will rise further.

The California Energy Commission puts the price somewhere between the two other estimates, at about \$14,000. Costs are falling by about 6% a year, but how many homeowners

The Sacramento Bee

## MAKE THE SUN RISE FROM THE WEST

### The Governor's Promise

During his campaign, Governor Schwarzenegger promised to help solve the state's ongoing energy problems by ensuring that 50% of all new homes are built with solar energy systems. Now is the time to build on that promise and use one of California's greatest resources—our bountiful sunlight—to meet one of our greatest needs—energy.

### Why Solar?

An ambitious program to promote solar on all rooftops would fight air pollution and global warming, reduce the need for expensive peaking power plants, create new jobs, and position California as a leader in a \$4 billion and growing global industry. And from a homeowner's perspective, when folded into a 30-year mortgage, solar homes are cheaper to live in.

### Be a part of the solution.

Each year, 150,000 new homes are built in California. These buildings will either be a part of the problem, requiring costly and polluting new power plants, or be a part of the solution, generating their own energy cleanly and cost-effectively. The Governor is now considering a bold plan to solarize new and existing rooftops—a comprehensive program that would bring solar into the mainstream. Now is the time for him to make good on his campaign promise, and make the sun rise from the west.

### CONTACT GOVERNOR SCHWARZENEGGER TODAY

Tell him to make the sun rise from the west

Email: [governor@governor.ca.gov](mailto:governor@governor.ca.gov)

To take action visit:

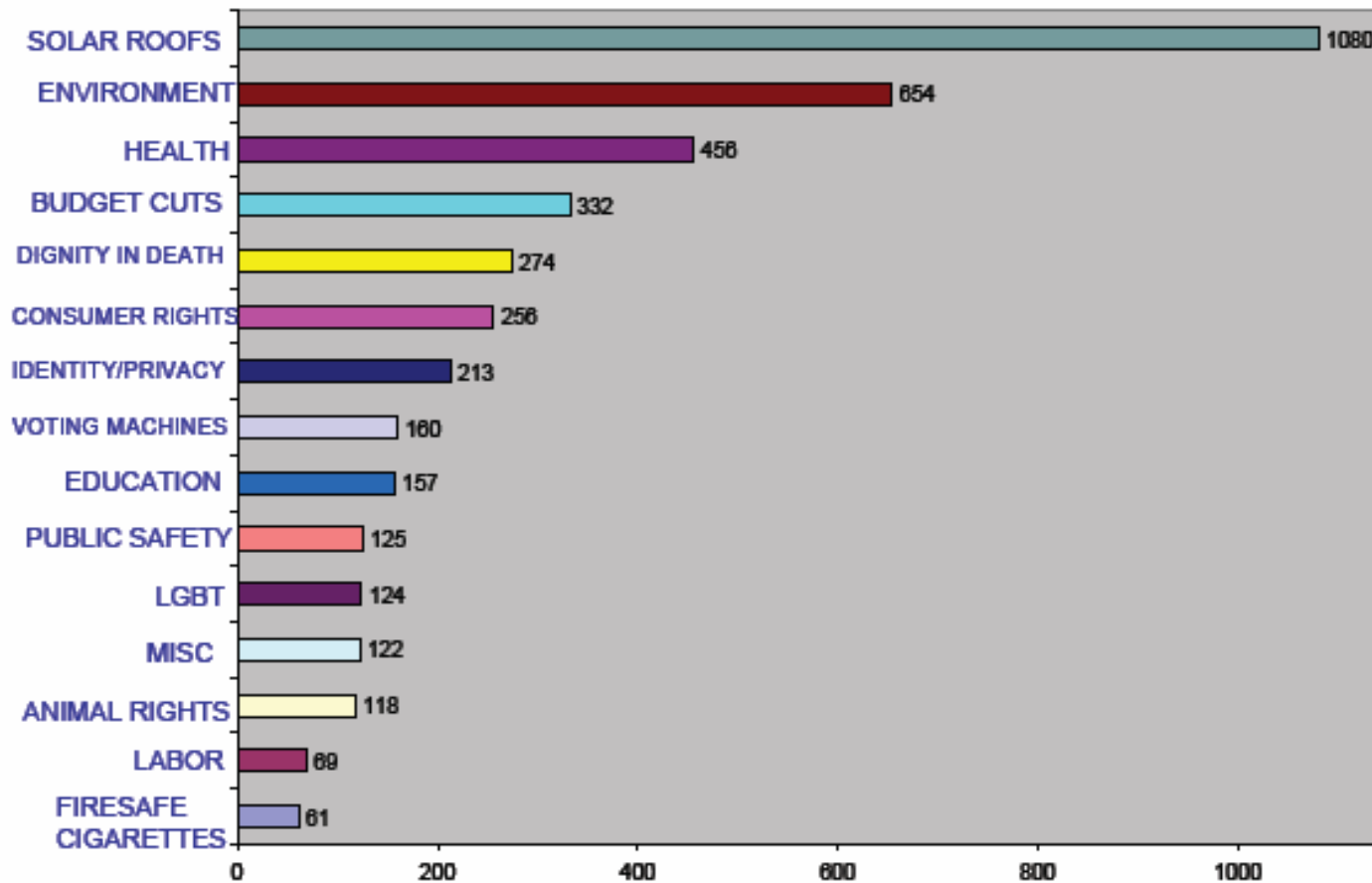
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VOTE SOLAR



# ...voluminous calls to legislators



Constituent contacts per issue by CA Assemblymember Koretz



Courtesy of Environment California



the element  
of surprise:

# EXTRA!

*MoveOn.org knows where we live*

## THE TOP TEN LIST

Issues Creating the Most Public Contacts in the Public  
Advisor's Office from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on November 23, 2005

TOPIC	Numbers of Contacts	Weeks On List
R.04-03-017 - the DG proceeding with the Solar component. As you know from previous editions of TT, <b>David Holschild, that nice person with the local VoteSolar.org group</b> , got several groups together who sent the Commission over 30k emails in 7 weeks. But the piece d'resistance was when he lined up MoveOn.org late last week; they sent out a form email and then encouraged members to add their own messages and send them back to MoveOn. <b>Today, between 9:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. we received 12,385 emails.</b> Nita of MoveOn asked how that could be when they sent only 10,400...no obvious duplications so who knows--- <b>maybe some messages picked up hitchhikers in cyberspace...</b>	<b>12,385 from MoveOn in 5.5 hours</b>  <b>61 emails on the assorted Subj. lines</b>  <b>6 letters</b>  <b>30,779 (TT total on Monday)</b>  <b>Grand total:</b>  <b>43,231 in 7 weeks &amp; a day</b>	Began October 4  Some Contents by Subj. Line  Fund the California Solar Initiative: <b>15,288</b>  Maximum Funding for California Solar Initiative: <b>5847 plus 2270 sent by Greenpeace CA</b>  Adopt A Strong Solar Rebate Program: <b>2016</b>  Please Keep the Million Solar Roof Plan: <b>856</b> plus the <b>12,385</b> from Move.On



# THANK YOU!

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